

**Denali Commission Award Number 01470-00 Study on Unregulated Drinking Water Sources****Semi Annual Report Period 1/1/2018 – 6/30/2018****Project Status**

This project is a collaboration between the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's (ANTHC) National Tribal Water Center (NTWC) and the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Health Studies Branch. The primary goal of this project is to develop and organize data, information, and knowledge about the current regulatory status, conditions, and use of unregulated water sources on Tribal lands in Alaska and across the United States. This project is on budget, and on schedule. Unregulated drinking water survey manuscript, strategic plan, and community outreach toolkit and evaluation of the toolkit is funded by this grant is currently on schedule.

**Project Accomplishments****Draft Manuscript Submitted**

A manuscript for publication of the *Project Coyote Water: An Assessment of Unregulated Water Sources on Tribal Lands Within the United States* was drafted and recently edited to address some additional comments. The manuscript has cleared the ANTHC Abstract, Manuscript, and Proposal Review Committee (AMP –RC) and reviewed by the CDC clearance. The CDC clearance process comments are currently being addressed. Following final CDC clearance the manuscript will be submitted to the American Journal for Public Health.

**Unregulated Drinking Water (UDW) Sampling Projects - Northern Cheyenne Tribe**

The National Tribal Water Center has assisted the Northern Cheyenne Tribe with the development and implementation of their UDW sampling project. This project will provide spring and well water sampling for water contaminants at natural springs and select private wells located on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. This project will test four natural springs and will also test 20 private wells once in the early summer for a Full Domestic Analysis, Uranium and Arsenic. Additionally, of the 20 private wells tested 10 of those wells we also be tested a second time in the fall for the Full Domestic Analysis, Uranium and Arsenic. The sampling project is currently underway.

**Unregulated Drinking Water (UDW) Sampling Projects – Cherokee Nation**

The National Tribal Water Center has assisted the Cherokee Nation with the development and implementation of their UDW sampling project at Snake Creek and Iron Post communities on the Cherokee Reservation. This project will provide private well water sampling for water contaminants at select private wells suspect of contamination. The sampling project is currently underway.

**Community Outreach Toolkit – “Water is Life”**

The community outreach toolkit title is “Water is Life”. The toolkit is a collaborative health promotion campaign that uses art, culture, and media to create teachable moments that translate into positive community wide behavior change towards our most sacred resource – water.

During the week of June 24, 2018 the National Tribal Water Center (NTWC) along with the Blackfeet Nation participated in 'Water Week'. Water Week is part of the Water is Life project. Through a collaboration with the Blackfeet Nation Agricultural Resource Management Plan team the Water is Life project toolkit was piloted. The toolkit's aim is to promote pride and ownership of the Tribal drinking water system and celebrate the Blackfeet Nation's cultural values and traditions surrounding water. Water is Life toolkit brings education and awareness to the community water system through community based activities.

A formal evaluation was part of this pilot. Dr. Matt Calhoun joined the NTWC team and the Blackfeet Nation to evaluate the toolkit prior and while it was being implemented.

The central activity of the Water is Life project is a cultural public mural painting on one of the water tanks on the reservation. Artist Lauren Monroe Jr. (Blackfeet) and Andrew Morrison (Haida/Apache) lead the painting of the mural. During a community visioning meeting, community members shared their ideas and thoughts for what is reflective of them and their tribe to be painted on the water tank.

The mural titled "Chief Two Guns" mural depicts the last tribal chief of the Pikuni Blackfeet Tribe. Born in 1872, Chief Two Guns White Calf was the son of White Calf was responsible for many of the Blackfoot Tribe's treaties. The symbols surrounding the figure are connected to the Blackfeet Tribes traditional culture, including the beaver, four triangle symbols representing the four tribal bands, their watershed, headdress, puffballs fungi design (fallen stars), and tepees. The puffballs also commonly used as tinder or punk for lighting fires, representations of which were to insure fire to those within."

Other events and activities that took place throughout Water Week included storytelling with tribal elders, educational activities taught by the following groups:

- Agricultural Resource Management Plan,
- Big Sky Watershed Corp,
- Blackfeet Community College (Native Science Fellows & USDA Interns),
- Blackfeet Department of Revenue,
- Blackfeet E.P.A - Interns,
- Rolland Kennerly and Marla Knopfle- Tatsey,
- Natural Resource Conservation District,
- Blackfeet Fish and Wildlife,
- Harmony Walkers Incorporation,
- Glacier National Park,
- Land Protection Specialist- Nature Conservatory,
- Montana State University,
- University of Montana,
- AmeriCops & Big Sky Watershed Blackfeet Tribe Facilities,
- Two Medicine Water Company, and
- Siyeh.

The youth also created drawing based on traditional stories that were shared about the beaver. The youth mural is going to be placed in the Blackfeet Nation Tribal Council Building.

Water Week concluded in a celebration with the Blackfeet community that included a blessing of the mural, community feed, and Water Warrior awards that recognized community members who have worked to protect water.

**Personnel changes**

The NTWC is pleased to welcome Dr. Laura Eichelberger Ph.D. MPH to the NTWC team as the Sr. Epidemiology and Health Research Consultant.

Laura Eichelberger is originally from Fairbanks and is a Senior Epidemiology and Health Research Consultant with the National Tribal Water Center (NTWC). She also is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Laura has a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Arizona, a Masters of Public Health from Johns Hopkins University, and is a former Cancer Prevention Fellow with the National Cancer Institute.

As a medical anthropologist, Laura focuses on health issues while being mindful of local values and cultural practices. From 2008 to 2009, Laura lived in Ambler and Buckland for 18 months learning about household struggles for clean water and sanitation, while participating in a subsistence lifestyle. Since then, she has continued to work with Alaska Native tribes across rural Alaska, using ethnographic and epidemiologic methods to document water and sanitation needs in these Indigenous communities.

**Project Problems**

There have been no substantial problems. The Northern Cheyenne Tribe monitoring project has been a little behind schedule but the sampling is getting back on track and looks to finish within the scheduled timeframe.